

## State gets more time to consider high speed rail possibilities

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February 25, 2011 - 2:52pm

High Speed rail has in Florida has another week before the federal government euthanizes it.

On Friday U.S. Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood announced that he has given the state of Florida another week to come up with a workable high speed rail plan between Orlando and Tampa.

Gov. Rick Scott announced earlier this month that he was rejecting \$2.4 billion in state money to build a high speed rail corridor. Even though the total cost was estimated at \$2.7 billion, with a private partner likely paying for the final \$300 million, Scott argued that the state could be responsible for cost overruns.

Florida officials like Congressman John Mica, Senator Bill Nelson and officials from Tampa, Miami and Orlando have been trying to come up with a plan that would save the project. Scott has repeatedly rejected these efforts, but LaHood said he met with Scott on Friday and still wanted to find a solution.

LaHood's entire written statement is below.

Secretary Ray LaHood: "This morning I met with Governor Rick Scott to discuss the high speed rail project that will create jobs and economic development for the entire state of Florida. He asked me for additional information about the state's role in this project, the responsibilities of the Florida Department of Transportation, as well as how the state would be protected from liability. I have decided to give Governor Scott additional time to review the agreement crafted by local officials from Orlando, Tampa, Lakeland and Miami, and to consult with his staff at the state Department of Transportation. He has committed to making a final decision by the end of next week. I feel we owe it to the people of Florida, who have been working to bring high speed rail to their state for the last 20 years, to go the extra mile."